

CHAPTER 8

COMPANY DRILL

“The fundamentals of drill are established daily ... If these maneuvers are all accurately observed and practiced every day then the army will remain virtually undefeatable and always awe inspiring...”

Frederick the Great: “History of My Own Times,” trans. 1789

Section I. PROCEDURES AND PERSONNEL

The procedures used and personnel required to conduct company drill are described in this section. (Appendix G contains an explanation of the symbols used in figures.)

8-1. BASIC INFORMATION

This paragraph discusses basic information that applies to conducting company drill.

a. Individual drill movements, manual of arms, and squad and platoon drills are executed as previously described while conducting company drill.

b. For the most part, company drill provides the procedures for executing platoon drill in conjunction with other platoons in the same formation.

c. For drill purposes, a company consists of a company headquarters and two or more platoons. The company headquarters personnel are attached to the platoons to equalize platoon strength without interfering with the permanent squad organization; however, the commander may form the headquarters personnel into a separate platoon at either flank of the company. When headquarters personnel form as a separate element, the senior sergeant serves as the platoon sergeant, and the company executive officer serves as the platoon leader.

d. When in a line or a mass formation, the right platoon serves as the base; when in a column formation, the lead platoon serves as the base.

e. The company may be formed by the commander and the platoon leaders or the first sergeant and the platoon sergeants. If the commander is not scheduled to receive or inspect the company, the first sergeant and platoon sergeants remain at their posts and execute company drill from their posts. For continuity purposes, the term “first sergeant” may be used to denote “commander,” just as “platoon sergeant” may be used to denote “platoon leader” when the first sergeant and platoon sergeants are conducting company drill from their posts.

f. When the first sergeant directs that the company open or close ranks, align, stack or take arms, extend march, close on the leading platoon, or prepare for inspection, the movements are executed on the command of the platoon sergeants and not on the directives of the first sergeant. The platoon sergeants command the movement in sequence beginning with the base platoon.

g. During all drills and ceremonies, the first sergeant and executive officer carry their weapons at *Sling Arms*. They remain at *Sling Arms* during all manual of arms movements except when they execute the *Hand Salute* while at *Sling Arms*.

h. The members of a company break ranks in the same manner as in platoon drill except that the individuals called from the formation form on the first sergeant rather than on the platoon sergeant.

i. The company marches, rests, and executes *Eyes Right* in the same manner as the platoon.

j. The company has four prescribed formations: company in line with platoons in line; company in column with platoons in column; company in column with platoons in line (used primarily for ceremonies); and company mass formation. However, the company may be formed into a column of twos in the same manner as the platoon.

8-2. POSTS FOR KEY PERSONNEL

Key personnel assume their posts as follows:

a. **Company Commander.** The company commander's post is normally 12 steps in front of the front rank of troops and centered on the company. The only exceptions to this rule are when the company forms as part of a larger unit in a column formation (with the company and platoons in column) or when the company is formed in a mass formation. In these situations, the company commander's post is 6 steps in front of and centered on the front rank of troops and 12 steps behind the last rank of troops of the element to his front.

b. **Guidon Bearer.** The guidon bearer's post is two 15-inch steps to the rear and two 15-inch steps to the left of the company commander (Figure 8-1). (The manual of the guidon is discussed in further detail in Appendix H.)

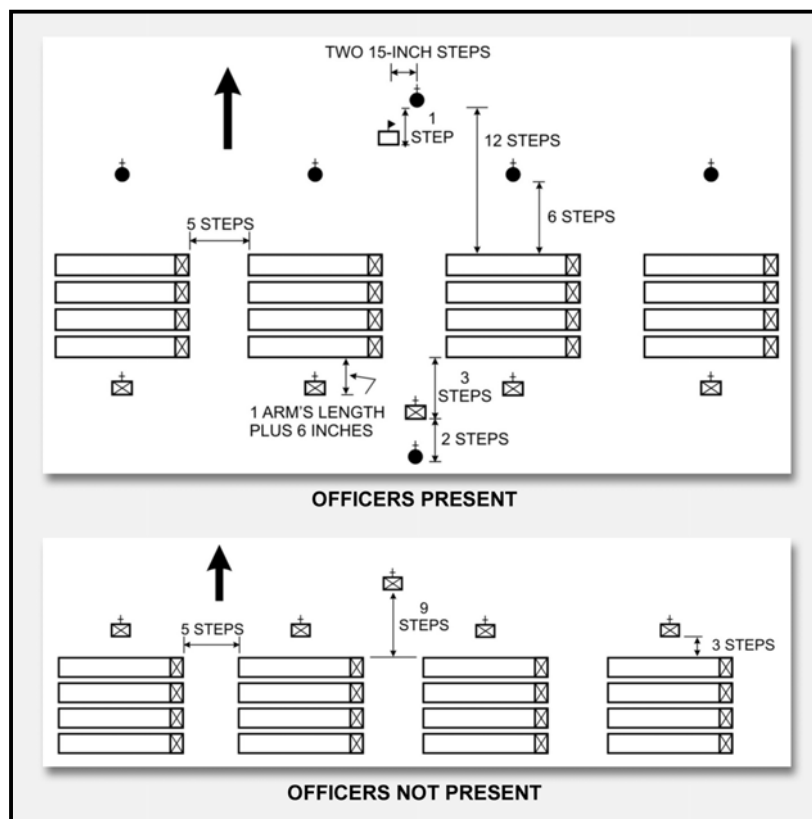


Figure 8-1. Company in line with platoons in line.

NOTE: The company commander should inconspicuously direct the guidon bearer to remain in position and move with the commander when the company is to be faced to the right and marched for only a short distance.

c. **Executive Officer.** When the company is in a line formation, the executive officer's post is two steps to the rear of the first sergeant; in a column or a mass formation, he is three steps to the rear of the last rank and off center (one 15-inch step to the right) of the company.

d. **Platoon Leaders.** When the company is in line formation with the platoons in line, the post for the platoon leader is six steps in front of and centered on his platoon. When the company is in column formation with the platoons in column or the company is in column with the platoons in line, the post for the platoon leader is one step in front of and centered on the platoon. When the company is in mass formation, the post for the platoon leaders is one step in front of and evenly spaced across the company front. If the commander is not present, the platoon leaders are not part of the formation.

e. **First Sergeant.** When the company is in a line formation, the first sergeant's post is three steps to the rear of the last rank and centered on the company; in a column or a mass formation, he is three steps to the rear of the last rank and off center (one 15-inch step to the left) of the company (Figure 8-2, page 8-4).

(1) When the company is in mass formation, *without the commander present*, the post for the first sergeant is five steps in front of and centered on the formation. When the company is in line formation with the platoons in line *without the commander present*, the post for the first sergeant is nine steps in front of and centered on the company. When the company is in column formation with the platoons in column *without the commander present*, the post for the first sergeant is nine steps to the left flank of and centered on the company.

(2) When marching the company in mass formation with the commander at his post, the first sergeant remains at his post to provide cadence and control.

f. **Platoon Sergeant.** When the company is in any of the four formations and the officers are present, the platoon sergeant's post is one step to the rear and centered on his platoon.

(1) When the company is in mass formation, the post for the platoon sergeants is one step to the rear of the company and evenly spaced across the frontage. When the company is in mass formation, *without the officers present*, the post for the platoon sergeants is one step in front of and evenly spaced across the front.

(2) When the company is in line formation with the platoons in line *without the officers present*, the post for the platoon sergeant is three steps in front of and centered on his platoon. When the company is in column formation with the platoons in column *without the officers present*, the post for the platoon sergeant is three steps to the left flank of and centered on his platoon.

(3) When marching the company *without the officers present*, and the company is in column formation with the platoons in column, the platoon sergeants remain at their posts and provide for cadence and control of their platoons.

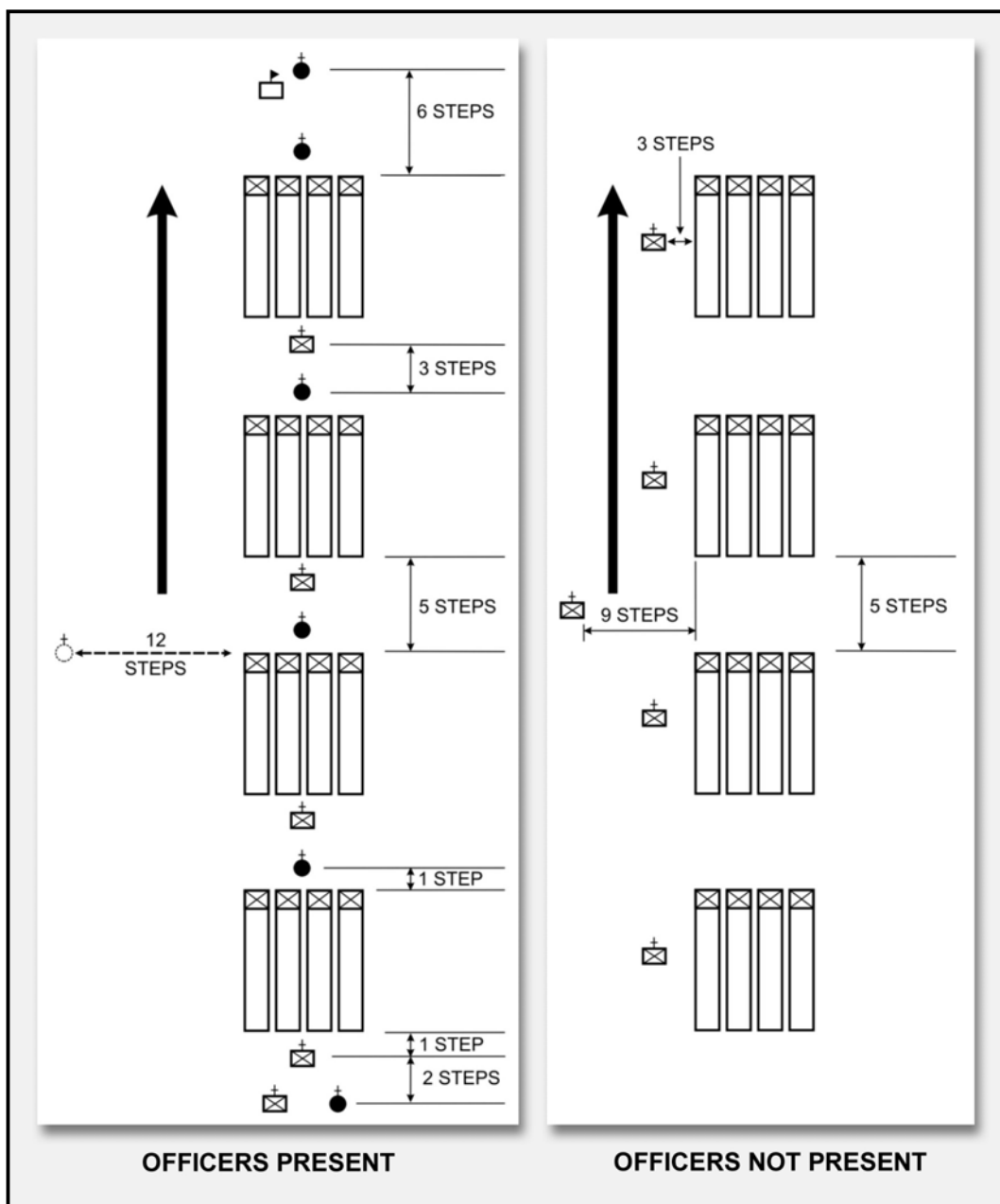


Figure 8-2. Company in column with platoons in column.

NOTE: The executive officer inconspicuously gives the necessary commands (*March, Column Half Left, Halt, and Facings*) for himself and the first sergeant when changing from one post to another. Once in motion, they incline as necessary and march to their new posts. When the company changes from a line formation to column formation, the first sergeant and executive officer face with the company but do not march forward. They remain in position until the last platoon has passed. If the company marches forward (column formation) for a short distance only, or if it closes on the base platoon (line formation) at

close interval, the first sergeant and executive officer march forward or face to the right in marching and resume their posts. When the company changes from a column (platoons in column) to a line formation, they face to the right in marching and assume their posts in line. When the company forms a company in column with platoons in line, as the unit is faced, they face to the right in marching and assume their posts to the rear of the last platoon. When the company is formed in mass, they face to the right in marching and assume their posts at the center of the company immediately after halting with the last platoon (Figure 8-3). The off-center position explained for the first sergeant and executive officer should place them at normal interval from each other while covering a file to their front. If either one is not present during a formation, the one present changes posts without command and assumes the post at the center of the company rather than off center (Figure 8-4, page 8-6).

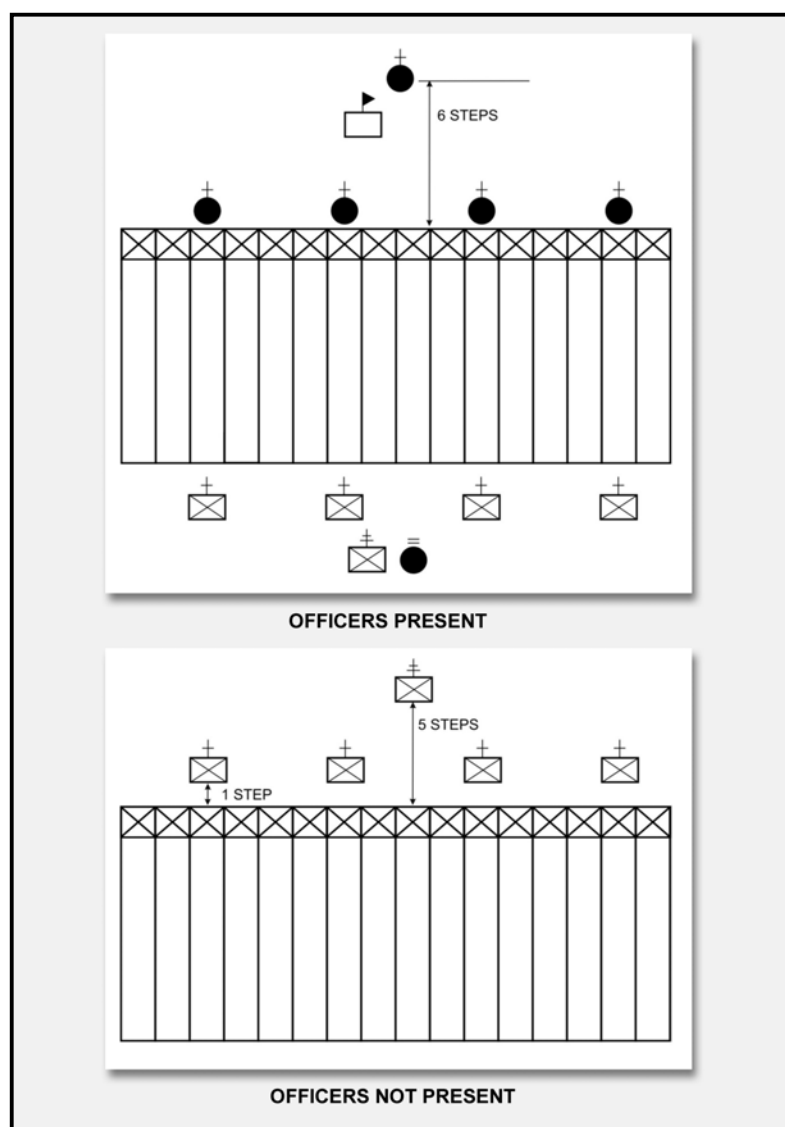


Figure 8-3. Company in mass.

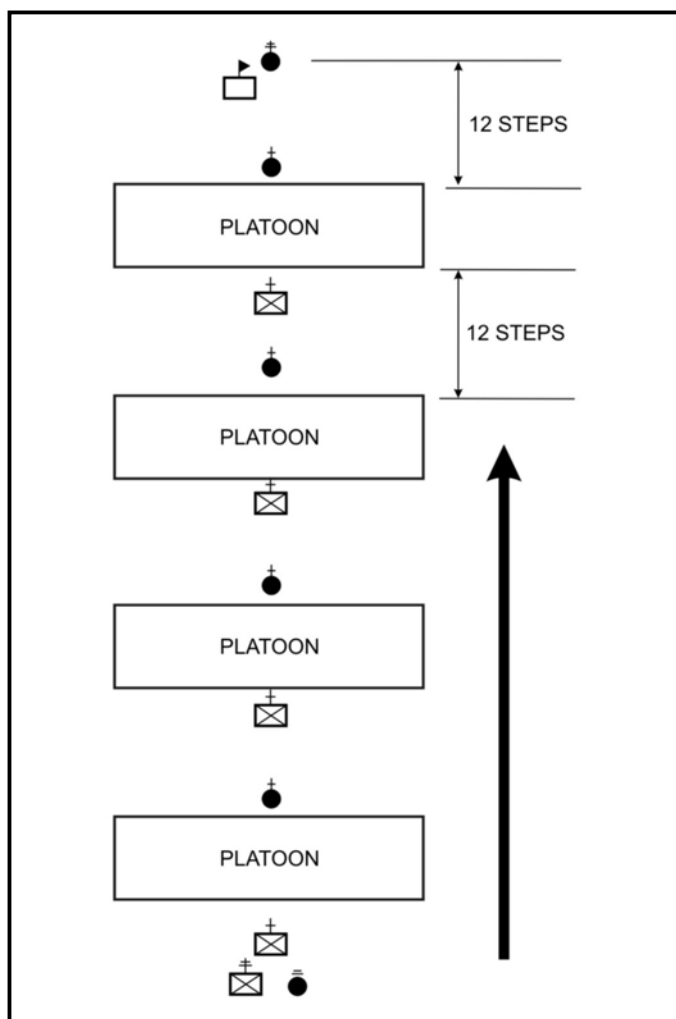


Figure 8-4. Company in column with platoons in line.

g. **Additional Officers.** Other officers assigned or attached, who have no prescribed position within the formation, form evenly to the right and left of the executive officer in a line formation; they fall out and form in one or two ranks at correct distance to the rear of the first sergeant and executive officer when the company forms in column (Figure 8-4).

Section II. FORMATIONS AND MOVEMENTS

This section discusses the formations and movements used in conducting a company drill.

8-3. BASIC INFORMATION

This paragraph discusses basic information that applies to the formations and movements used in conducting a company drill.

a. The company normally forms in a line formation; however, it may re-form in column when each man can identify his exact position (equipment grounded) in the formation.

b. The company forms basically the same as the platoon. On the command **FALL IN; (At Close Interval), FALL IN**, the platoons form in line, centered on and facing the person forming the unit, with five-step intervals between platoons.

NOTE: To have the company assemble in a company mass formation the command is **Mass Formation, FALL IN**. Before giving the commands the person forming the unit announces the interval and the number of personnel in the front and designates the base man. In this situation, the first sergeant and platoon sergeants travel around the right flank of the formation when moving from post to post. The commander and platoon leaders travel around the left flank of the formation when moving from post to post.

c. When armed, members fall in at *Order (Sling) Arms*. For safety, the person forming the unit commands **Inspection, ARMS; Ready, Port, ARMS; Order (Sling), ARMS** at the initial formation of the day, or when the last command is **DISMISSED**.

d. The company may be formed by the first sergeant and platoon sergeants or by the company commander and platoon leaders. When possible, the platoons assemble near the formation site before the arrival of the first sergeant or company commander. If the company is formed by the noncommissioned officers, the platoon leaders normally observe the procedures from a position to the rear of their platoons.

(1) When the company is formed by the noncommissioned officers, the following procedures apply.

(a) The first sergeant posts himself nine steps in front of (center) and facing the line where the front rank of each platoon is to form. He then commands **FALL IN; (At Close Interval), FALL IN**.

(b) On the command of execution, the platoons form in the same manner prescribed in platoon drill. Each platoon sergeant faces his platoon while the platoons are forming and directs his platoon to adjust (if necessary) and align on the platoon to its right at the correct interval (as described in paragraph 8-5). Once the platoon is formed, the platoon sergeants face about.

NOTE: If the command **At Close Interval, FALL IN** is given, the members of the platoon form at close interval; however, the five-step interval between platoons is maintained.

(c) When all of the platoon sergeants are facing to the front, the first sergeant commands (if appropriate) **Inspection, ARMS; Ready, Port, ARMS; Order (Sling), ARMS**. He then directs (if appropriate) **RECEIVE THE REPORT**. The platoon sergeants face about and command **REPORT**. The squad leaders report as previously described in Chapter 7. Having received the report, the platoon sergeants face about. When all platoon sergeants are facing to the front, the first sergeant commands **REPORT**. The platoon sergeants turn their head and eyes toward the first sergeant, salute

and report (as previously described in Chapter 7) in succession from right to left. The first sergeant turns his head and eyes toward the reporting platoon sergeant and returns each *Salute* individually. Having received the report from the platoon sergeants, the first sergeant faces about and awaits the arrival of the company commander if the commander is scheduled to receive the company.

NOTE: If the commander is not scheduled to receive or inspect the company, the first sergeant and platoon sergeants remain at their posts and execute company drill from their posts. For continuity purposes, the term commander may also be used to denote the first sergeant, just as platoon leader may be used to denote the platoon sergeant when the commander and platoon leaders are conducting company drill from their posts.

(d) When the company commander has halted at his post, the first sergeant salutes and reports, ***“Sir, all present,”*** or ***“Sir, all accounted for,”*** or ***“Sir, (so many) men absent.”*** The company commander returns the *Salute* and commands **POST**. The first sergeant faces about and marches to his post three steps to the rear and at the center of the company, halts, and faces about. The guidon bearer steps forward three steps. The platoon sergeants face to the right in marching and assume their posts to the rear of their platoons (if the platoon leader is not present, they step forward three steps). The platoon leaders march around the left flank of their platoons and assume their posts by inclining facing to the front. The company executive officer assumes his post two steps to the rear of the first sergeant.

(2) When the company is formed by the company commander, the procedures are the same as forming with the noncommissioned officers except that the platoon leaders form their platoons and the first sergeant, platoon sergeants, and guidon bearer fall in at their posts (Figure 8-1, page 8-2). The command **POST** is not necessary. If a platoon sergeant is to fill the post of platoon leader, he takes a position six steps in front of and centered on the platoon.

8-4. CHANGING INTERVAL

The company changes interval in the same manner as prescribed for the platoon.

a. When the first sergeant wants the company to obtain close interval in a line formation while maintaining a five-step interval, he directs **CLOSE ON THE BASE PLATOON AT CLOSE INTERVAL**. The platoon sergeants face about and command **Count, OFF**. After the platoons have counted off, the platoon sergeants command **Close Interval, MARCH**. The second, third, and fourth platoon sergeants command **Right, FACE** and in succession command **Half Step, MARCH**. They halt at the five-step interval and face the platoon to the left. If the directive **CLOSE ON THE THIRD PLATOON AT CLOSE INTERVAL** is given, the platoon sergeants on the right of the designated platoon have their platoons obtain close interval, face their platoons to the left, march (*Half Step*) forward until the five-step interval is obtained, and then halt and face their platoons to the right.

NOTE: When the company is at close interval (line formation), the first sergeant may march the company (in column with less than correct distance) at the *Half Step* for short distances. If he wants to march with a 30-inch step while marching with less than correct distance, he commands ***Extend, MARCH***. The first platoon sergeant commands ***Extend, MARCH***. The other platoon sergeants command **CONTINUE TO MARCH**. As the first platoon begins to march with a 30-inch step, the second platoon sergeant commands ***Extend, MARCH***. The remaining platoons execute the directive in the same manner as the second platoon.

b. When the first sergeant wants the company to obtain normal interval from close interval in a line formation while maintaining a five-step interval, he directs **EXTEND ON THE BASE PLATOON AT NORMAL INTERVAL**. The platoon sergeants face about and march (*Half Step*) their platoons to a position that ensures the five-step interval between platoons after they have obtained normal interval. After halting and facing the platoons to the left, the platoon sergeants command ***Count, OFF***. The platoon sergeants then command ***Normal Interval, MARCH***. If necessary, the platoon sergeant can verify interval as described in the note of paragraph 8-6.

8-5. CHANGING DISTANCE

To increase the distance between elements of a company (or larger unit) while marching in column to normal distance, use the following procedures.

NOTE: This movement is only executed from the half step when a company or larger size element is marching in column at less than normal distance.

a. To increase the distance between elements of a company (or larger unit) while marching in column at the half step to normal distance, the command is ***Extend, MARCH***. On the preparatory command ***Extend*** of ***Extend, MARCH***, the platoon sergeant echoes the preparatory command and all subsequent platoon sergeants issue the supplementary command **CONTINUE TO MARCH**. On the command of execution **MARCH** of ***Extend, MARCH***, the front rank of the lead element takes one more 15-inch step, then steps off with a 30-inch step. All other ranks continue to march with a 15-inch step until the rank to their front has stepped off with a 30-inch step and has obtained normal distance (40 inches).

b. Subsequent platoon sergeants issue the command ***Extend, MARCH*** after the entire element to their front has obtained normal distance and has begun marching forward with a 30-inch step.

NOTE: From the *Halt*, the first sergeant directs **HAVE YOUR PLATOONS EXTEND MARCH**. The lead platoon sergeant gives the command ***Extend, MARCH***. All subsequent platoon sergeants give the command ***Half Step, MARCH***. On the command of execution **MARCH** of ***Extend, MARCH***, the front rank steps off with a 30-inch step. All other ranks step off with a 15-inch step and execute the movement in the same manner as previously described.

8-6. ALIGNING THE COMPANY

To align the company, use the following procedures:

a. To align the company in a line formation, the first sergeant directs **HAVE YOUR PLATOONS DRESS RIGHT**.

(1) On the directive, all platoon sergeants face about. The right flank platoon sergeant commands ***Dress Right, DRESS*** and aligns his platoon as described in platoon drill. When the alignment of the first rank of the right platoon has been verified (the platoon sergeant has stepped off to align the second rank), the platoon sergeant to the left commands ***Dress Right, DRESS***. He then faces to the half right in marching, moves to a position on line with and one step to the left of the left flank man of the first rank, and faces (*Left Face*) down the line.

(2) After aligning the first rank, the platoon sergeant centers himself on the first rank, faces to the right in marching, takes two short steps, halts, executes *Left Face*, and aligns the second rank. The third and fourth ranks are aligned in the same manner as the second rank.

(3) After aligning the fourth rank, the platoon sergeant faces to the left in marching; returns to his position, center of the platoon; halts perpendicular to the formation; faces to the right; commands ***Ready, FRONT***; and faces about. All platoon sergeants to the left of the second platoon take the same actions as the second platoon sergeant.

NOTE: If necessary, the platoon sergeants to the left of the base platoon command **VERIFY INTERVAL** before commanding ***Dress Right, DRESS***. On the command **VERIFY INTERVAL**, the base (squad leader of the first squad) faces to the right in marching and moves to the left flank member (first squad) of the platoon to the right, halts, faces about, steps forward five steps, halts, faces to the right, and aligns himself on the element to his right.

b. To align the company in column, the first sergeant directs **HAVE YOUR PLATOONS COVER**. On this directive, the first platoon sergeant faces about and commands **COVER**. The other platoon sergeants command **STAND FAST**. The first platoon covers as in platoon drill. The other platoons then execute the movement in succession as soon as the platoon to their front has completed the movement.

8-7. OPENING AND CLOSING RANKS

To open and close ranks, use the following procedures:

a. To *Open Ranks*, the first sergeant directs **HAVE YOUR PLATOONS OPEN RANKS AND DRESS RIGHT**. On the directive, all platoon sergeants face about. The right flank platoon sergeant commands ***Open Ranks, MARCH***. When the platoon has completed the movement, he then commands ***Dress Right, DRESS*** and aligns the platoon the same as in platoon drill. When the first rank of the right platoon has been aligned, the platoon sergeant to the left commands ***Open Ranks, MARCH*** and then commands ***Dress Right, DRESS***. Then he aligns his platoon in the same manner described in paragraphs 7-6 and 8-5. All platoon sergeants to the left of the second platoon take the same actions as the second platoon sergeant.

NOTE: When clearing grounded equipment, the company may march in column (right face) from open ranks (*Double Interval*) for short distances. Having cleared the equipment, the first sergeant commands **Normal Interval, MARCH**. When returning to the equipment while marching at normal interval, the command **Double Interval, MARCH** is given. If the company is marching in reverse order, the commands **FALL OUT** and **FALL IN** should be given.

b. To *Close Ranks*, the first sergeant directs **HAVE YOUR PLATOONS CLOSE RANKS**. On the directive, all platoon sergeants face about and in sequence from right to left command **Close Ranks, MARCH**. The platoons execute the movement the same as in platoon drill. After the platoons have completed the movement, the platoon sergeants face about.

8-8. CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF MARCH OF A COLUMN

To change the direction of march of a column, use the following procedures.

a. The company changes the direction of march basically the same as the squad and platoon. The commands are **Column Right (Left), Column Half Right (Left), MARCH**.

b. The base element during a column movement is the lead platoon and the squad on the flank, in the direction of turn.

c. When at the *Halt*, the leading platoon sergeant repeats the first sergeant's preparatory command. Succeeding platoon sergeants give the supplementary command **Forward**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon executes the movement as described in platoon drill; succeeding platoons execute the movement on their platoon sergeant's command at approximately the same location.

d. While marching, the movement is executed as described from the *Halt* except that the succeeding platoon sergeants give the supplementary command **Continue to march** rather than **Forward**.

e. The company executes *Rear March* and inclines in the same manner as the platoon.

f. When executing *Counter-Column March* from the *Halt*, the leading platoon sergeant repeats the preparatory command. Succeeding platoon sergeants give the supplementary command **Forward**.

(1) On the command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon executes the movement as described in platoon drill, and marches through the other platoons. Succeeding platoons execute the movement on the platoon sergeant's command at approximately the same location.

(2) When the movement is executed while marching, the command of execution is given as the left foot strikes the marching surface. The movement is executed basically the same as from the *Halt* except that the succeeding platoon sergeants give the supplementary command **Continue to March** rather than **Forward**.

(3) The guidon bearer faces to the left in marching from the *Halt* or executes a *Column Left* in marching, marches by the most direct route outside of the formation, and repositions himself in front of the lead platoon as it clears the rear of the company.

(4) If the first sergeant gives the command from his post in a separate unit, he moves in the most convenient manner to his new position at the left flank of the unit. If he gives the command while at the head of the company, he moves in the same direction as the guidon bearer.

8-9. CLOSING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN PLATOONS

This movement is only executed when the company is in column with the platoons in column and has been faced to the right for marching with the first sergeant and platoon sergeants at their posts.

a. The first sergeant directs **CLOSE ON THE LEADING PLATOON**. The leading platoon sergeant commands **STAND FAST**. The leading platoon sergeant then faces to the left as in marching and marches, inclining as necessary, to the trail of the company.

b. The succeeding platoon's platoon sergeant marches his platoon forward and commands **Mark Time, MARCH**. He ensures that he gives the command of execution **MARCH** when the squad leaders are three steps from the last soldier in the leading platoon so that the soldiers of the succeeding platoon begin marching in place at the correct distance.

c. While *Marking Time* in formation, the soldiers adjust position to ensure proper alignment and cover. The proper distance between soldiers while marching is one arm's length plus 6 inches (approximately 36 inches). If necessary, the squad leaders take the appropriate number of steps to close any gaps should the trail of the leading platoon be uneven. The rest of the formation adjusts as necessary.

d. After sensing that the members of the platoon have obtained proper alignment and cover, the platoon sergeant commands **Platoon, HALT**. After commanding the platoon to *Halt*, the platoon sergeant faces to the left as in marching and marches, inclining as necessary, to the trail of the company.

e. The remaining platoons execute in the same manner as the succeeding platoon in order from front to rear. The platoon sergeants wait until the platoon sergeant to their front gives the command **Mark Time, MARCH**, before giving the command **Forward, MARCH**.

f. The platoon sergeants form at the trail of the company one step to the rear and evenly spaced. The platoon sergeants are now part of the formation. If the first sergeant wants exact cover and alignment, he commands **COVER**. The first sergeant remains at his post and marches the company.

8-10. CORRECTING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN PLATOONS

To obtain correct distance (five steps) when the company is marching in column or is in column at the *Halt*, the first sergeant directs **CORRECT ON LEADING PLATOON**.

a. When at the *Halt*, on the directive **CORRECT ON LEADING PLATOON**, the platoon sergeant of the leading platoon commands (over the right shoulder) **STAND FAST**. The succeeding platoon sergeants command (over the right shoulder) **Forward, MARCH** and then command **Mark Time, MARCH** and **Platoon, HALT** when correct distance is obtained.

b. While marching, on the directive **CORRECT ON LEADING PLATOON**, the platoon sergeant of the leading platoon commands (over the right shoulder) **Half Step**,

MARCH. The succeeding platoon sergeants command (over the right shoulder) **CONTINUE TO MARCH**, and then command *Half Step*, **MARCH** as soon as the correct distance is obtained.

c. The first sergeant commands *Forward*, **MARCH; (HALT)** as soon as all platoons have obtained the correct distance and are marching at the half step.

8-11. FORMING A COLUMN OF TWOS AND RE-FORMING

The company forms a column of twos basically the same as the platoon. The first sergeant must allow sufficient time for the platoon sergeants, and the squad leaders of the lead platoon, to give their supplementary commands before giving the command of execution.

a. The command for this movement is *Column of twos from the right (left)*, **MARCH**. The leading platoon sergeant repeats the preparatory command. Other platoon sergeants give the supplementary command *Stand Fast*. On the first sergeant's command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon executes the movement as in platoon drill. Other platoons execute the movement on their platoon sergeant's command. Succeeding platoon sergeants give their commands so as to follow with the prescribed five-step distance between platoons.

b. Re-forming into a column of fours is executed only at the *Halt*. The command for this movement is *Column of fours to the left (right)*, **MARCH**. On the first sergeant's command of execution, all platoons execute the movement simultaneously as described in platoon drill. As soon as the platoons are re-formed, the platoon sergeants automatically march the platoons forward and obtain the five-step distance between platoons.

8-12. FORMING A COMPANY MASS

The company may form in mass from a company in column (platoons in column) when halted or while marching. The company must be at *Close Interval* (*Close Interval*, **MARCH**) before the command *Company Mass Left*, **MARCH** is given.

a. On the preparatory command *Company Mass Left*, given at the *Halt*, the leading platoon sergeant commands *Stand Fast*. The platoon sergeants of the succeeding platoons command *Column Half Left*. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon *stands fast*. The other platoons execute the *Column Half Left* and then execute a *Column Half Right* on the command of the platoon sergeants to a point (line) that ensures the platoons will be at *Close Interval* alongside the platoon to their right when halted. As the platoons come abreast of the base platoon, the platoon sergeants command *Mark Time*, **MARCH**. While the platoon is marking time, the members adjust their positions to ensure alignment on the man to their right. The platoon sergeants allow their platoons to *Mark Time* for about eight counts and then command *Platoon*, **HALT**.

b. On the preparatory command *Company Mass Left* while marching, given as the left foot strikes the marching surface, the leading platoon sergeant gives the supplementary command *Mark Time*. The succeeding platoon sergeants command *Column Half Left*. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon begins to march in place. After marking time for about eight counts, the lead platoon sergeant commands *Platoon*, **HALT**. The other platoons form in the same manner as from the *Halt*.

- NOTES:**
1. If the commander is in charge of the formation, on the command of execution **MARCH**, the first sergeant and guidon bearer halt and immediately face to the right (left) in marching and reposition themselves centered on the company.
 2. If the platoon sergeants are marching at their posts on the left flank of their platoons, they must wait until the platoon sergeants to their front have commanded **HALT** and have moved to the front of the company before moving into position.

8-13. ALIGNING A COMPANY IN MASS

To align a company in mass, use the following procedures:

a. As soon as the company has formed in mass, the first sergeant gives the command **Order, ARMS** (if appropriate) and then commands *At Close Interval, Dress Right, DRESS*.

b. On the command of execution **DRESS**, the platoon sergeant of the right platoon marches by the most direct route to the right flank and verifies the alignment of as many ranks as necessary to ensure proper alignment in the same manner as aligning the platoon. When he has finished the verification, the platoon sergeant returns to a position one step in front of and centered on the third squad, halts, and faces to the right. When the platoon sergeant has returned to his position, the first sergeant commands **Ready, FRONT**. Platoon sergeants align themselves to the right. The first sergeant directs the platoon sergeants to move left or right to ensure the platoon sergeants are evenly spaced across the front.

8-14. CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF MARCH OF A MASS FORMATION

The company changes the direction of march in mass basically the same as a platoon column movement. This movement is normally executed with the commander at his post. For clarity purposes, the term “commander” is used.

a. When executed from the *Halt*, the commander has the unit execute *Right Shoulder Arms* (if appropriate), then faces in the desired direction of march, turns his head toward the formation, and commands **Right (Left) Turn, MARCH**.

(1) On the command of execution **MARCH**, the platoon leaders face to the half right (left) in marching and continue to march in an arc until parallel to the new direction of march. Then they begin marching with the *Half Step*, dressing on the right (left) flank platoon leader until the command **Forward, MARCH** is given.

(2) The right (left) guide (the base squad leader in the direction of turn) faces to the right (left) in marching, takes one 30-inch step in the indicated direction, and then takes up the *Half Step*. All other squad leaders (front rank) face to the half right (left) in marching and continue to march in an arc until they come on line with the guide.

(3) At this time, they begin marching with the *Half Step* and dress (glancing out of the corner of the eye) in the direction of the turn until the command **Forward, MARCH** is given. On that command, the dress is automatically to the right. All other members march forward and execute the movement in the same manner as their squad leaders.

b. When executed while marching, the movement is the same as from the *Halt* except that the company commander faces about (marching backward) to give the

command ***Right (Left) Turn, MARCH***. He then faces about and completes the turning movement himself. After the company has completed the turn, he faces about, commands ***Forward, MARCH***, and again faces about.

8-15. FORMING A COLUMN FROM A COMPANY MASS

This movement is normally executed with the commander at his post. For clarity purposes, the term “commander” is used. To form a company in column from a company mass at the *Halt*, the command is ***Column of Platoons, Right Platoon, Column Right (Column Half Right), MARCH***. The right platoon leader gives the supplementary command of ***Forward (Column Right or Column Half Right)***, and the other platoon leaders command ***Stand Fast***.

a. On the command of execution ***MARCH***, the right platoon marches in the direction indicated. All other platoons follow (in sequence) in column, executing ***Column Half Right*** and ***Column Half Left*** on the commands of the platoon leaders.

b. To execute the movement when marching, the company commander commands ***Port, ARMS*** (unless at *Sling Arms*), and then commands ***Column of Platoons, Right Platoon, Double Time, MARCH***. On the preparatory command, the right platoon leader gives the supplementary command ***Double Time***, and the other platoon leader gives the supplementary command ***Continue to March***. On the command of execution ***MARCH***, the right platoon marches in ***Double Time***. Other platoon leaders (in sequence) command ***Column Half Right, Double Time, MARCH*** and ***Column Half Left, MARCH*** to bring the succeeding platoons in column with the leading platoon.

c. The platoon leader and the platoon sergeant reposition themselves after the supplementary command but before the command of execution.

8-16. FORMING A COMPANY IN COLUMN WITH PLATOONS IN LINE AND RE-FORMING

This movement is normally executed with the commander at his post. For clarity purposes, the term “commander” is used. To form a company in column with platoons in line from a column formation at the *Halt*, the command is ***Column of platoons in line, MARCH***. The platoon leader of the leading platoon gives the supplementary command ***Stand Fast***. The second platoon leader gives the supplementary command ***Column Right***. All other platoon leaders give the supplementary command ***Forward***.

a. On the command of execution ***MARCH***, the leading platoon ***Stands Fast***, and the second platoon executes a ***Column Right***, marches 12 steps past the right file of the first platoon, and executes a ***Column Left***. As they come on line with the base platoon, the platoon leader commands ***Mark Time, MARCH***. After the platoon has marched in place for eight counts, the platoon leader commands ***Platoon, HALT***. The succeeding platoons execute a ***Column Right*** At approximately the same location as the platoon to their front and execute a ***Column Left*** and then halt in the same manner as the second platoon. When the platoons have halted in position, the company commander commands ***Left, FACE***. On that command, the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants face in marching and assume their posts.

b. When executed while marching, the movements are basically the same as from the *Halt* except that the commander gives the command of execution as the right foot strikes

the marching surface. The leading platoon leader commands **Mark Time**. On the preparatory command, the second platoon leader commands **Column Right**, and the succeeding platoon leaders command **Continue to March**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the leading platoon executes **Mark Time** and marches in place (approximately eight counts) until the platoon leader commands **Platoon, HALT**. The other platoons execute the movement in the same manner as from the *Halt*.

c. To re-form in column with platoons in column, the company commander commands **Right, Face; Column of Platoons, Left Platoon, MARCH**. On the command **Right, Face**, the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants face in marching and resume their posts in column. On the preparatory command **Column of Platoons, Left Platoon**, the left platoon leader commands **Forward, (Column Left [Half Left])**. All other platoon leaders command **Column Half Left**. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the left platoon executes the movement. The other platoon leaders give the appropriate commands so as to follow the lead platoon at correct distance.

NOTE: If necessary, the platoons following the second platoon automatically adjust the length of their step to ensure correct distance from the platoon to their front.

8-17. DISMISSING THE COMPANY

The company is dismissed while at *Attention*. It is usually dismissed by the first sergeant.

a. The first sergeant commands **TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR PLATOONS**. The platoon sergeants salute. The first sergeant returns all *Salutes* with one *Salute*. After *Salutes* are exchanged, the first sergeant and guidon bearer leave the formation. The platoon sergeants then dismiss their platoons as in platoon drill.

b. When the company is dismissed by the company commander, he commands **TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR PLATOONS**. The platoon leaders salute. The company commander returns all *Salutes* with one *Salute*. After the *Salutes* are exchanged, the company commander, guidon bearer, first sergeant, and executive officer leave the formation.

(1) The platoon leader(s) faces about and commands **PLATOON SERGEANT**. The platoon sergeant faces to the right in marching and marches (inclines) around the squad leader(s), halts three steps in front of and centered on the platoon leader, and faces to the right. Each platoon leader then directs **TAKE CHARGE OF THE PLATOON**. *Salutes* are exchanged. The platoon leaders leave the formation.

(2) The platoon sergeants step forward three steps, face about, and dismiss the platoons as in platoon drill.

Section III. INSPECTIONS

This section discusses the procedures used to conduct inspections for a company drill.

8-18. BASIC INFORMATION

The following basic information applies to conducting inspections for a company drill.

a. The company has one prescribed formation for inspecting personnel and equipment in ranks—company in line with platoons in line. When inspecting crew-served weapons and vehicles, the personnel are normally positioned to the rear of the formation with the operator (gunner) standing by his vehicle (weapon).

NOTES: 1. If the commander is not scheduled to receive or inspect the company, the first sergeant and platoon sergeants remain at their posts and execute company drill from their posts. For continuity purposes, the term “first sergeant” may also be used to denote the commander, just as “platoon sergeant” may be used to denote the platoon leader when they are executing drill from their posts. If the commander is inspecting, he and the platoon leaders execute the same as described below.

2. Manual of arms movements for soldiers armed with the M249, shotgun, or pistol are outlined in Appendix E.

b. The first sergeant may conduct an in-quarters (barracks) inspection to include personal appearance, individual weapons, field equipment, displays, maintenance, and sanitary conditions.

c. When field equipment is to be inspected, it should be displayed as shown in Figure 8-5, page 8-18, (as a guide). Additional equipment not shown, or different models of the equipment, should be arranged in a uniform manner established by the local commander.

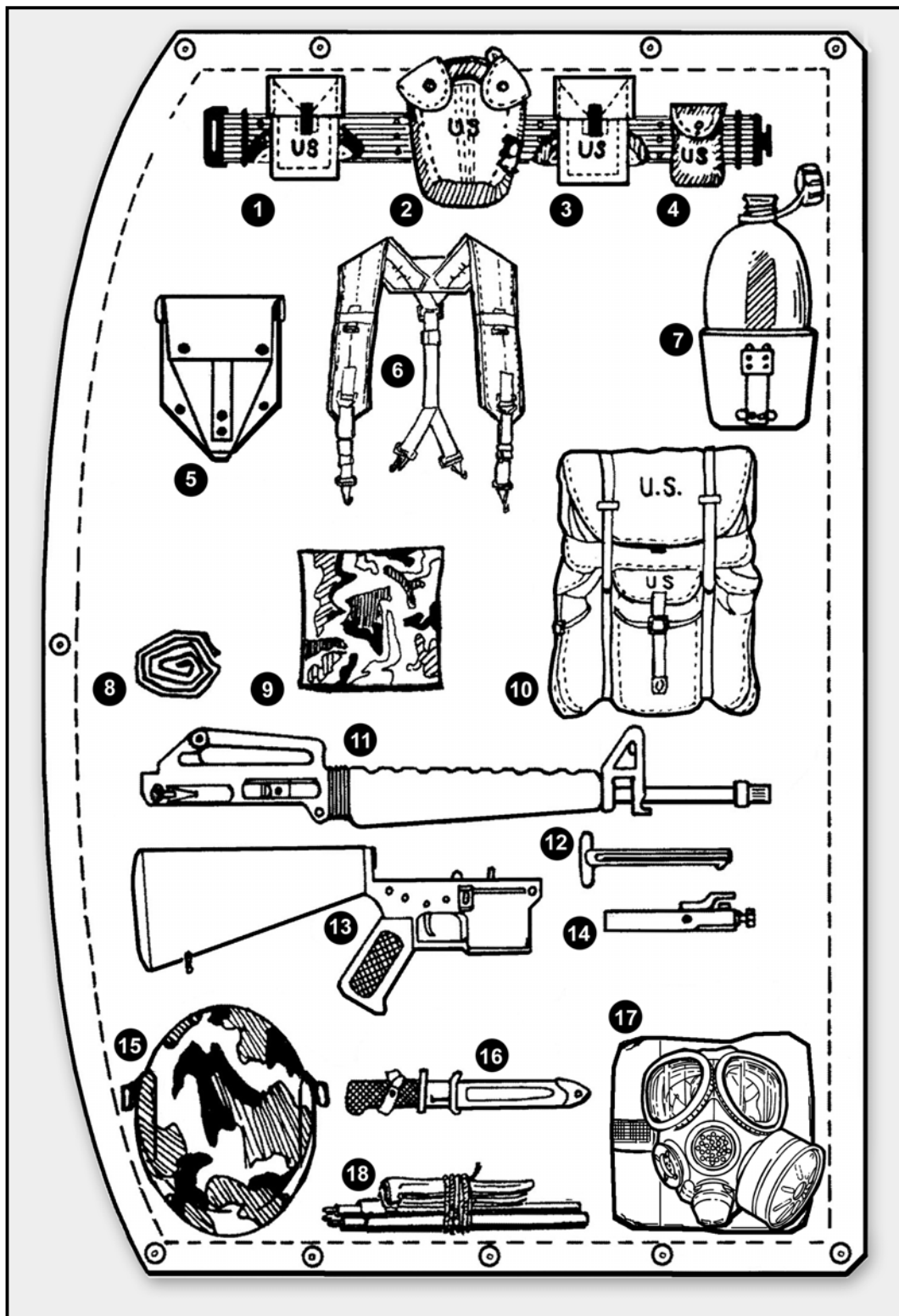


Figure 8-5. Equipment display (guide).

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. PISTOL BELT | 10. RUCK SACK |
| 2. AMMUNITION POUCH | 11. UPPER RECEIVER |
| 3. CANTEEN COVER | 12. CHARGING HANDLE |
| 4. AMMUNITION POUCH | 13. LOWER RECEIVER |
| 5. ENTRENCHING TOOL AND CARRIER | 14. BOLT CARRIER GROUP |
| 6. FIELD SUSPENDERS | 15. HELMET |
| 7. CANTEEN | 16. BAYONET AND SCABBARD |
| 8. SLING | 17. PROTECTIVE MASK |
| 9. PONCHO | 18. TENT STAKES, POLES, AND ROPE |

Figure 8-5. Equipment display (guide) (continued).

8-19. IN-RANKS INSPECTION (LINE FORMATIONS)

Use the following procedures to conduct an in-ranks inspection (line formation).

a. With the company in line formation, the first sergeant directs **PREPARE FOR INSPECTION**. On that directive, the platoon sergeants face about, open ranks, and align the company as in paragraphs 8-5 and 8-6. When all platoon sergeants are facing the front, the first sergeant commands **AT EASE**.

NOTE: During the inspection, the guidon bearer, officers, and noncommissioned officers not in ranks assume the position of attention as the inspecting officer approaches their positions and resume the at ease position after they have been inspected (they do not execute inspection arms). The company commander may direct the first sergeant and executive officer to accompany him during the inspection. When so directed, the executive officer and first sergeant take a position at normal interval (close interval if the company is at close interval) to the left of the company commander.

b. The first sergeant begins the inspection by stepping forward and inspecting the guidon bearer. He then faces to the half left in marching and proceeds to the right of the line. As he approaches the right flank platoon, the platoon sergeant commands (over his right shoulder) **Platoon, ATTENTION**. When the first sergeant has halted directly in front of him, he reports, ***“First Sergeant, the platoon is prepared for inspection.”*** (If the commander is inspecting, *Salutes* are exchanged.) The first sergeant inspects the platoon sergeant. The first sergeant then directs the platoon sergeant to lead him through the inspection, faces to the half left in marching, and halts directly in front of the squad leader of the first squad. As the first sergeant faces to the half left in marching, the platoon sergeant faces to the right in marching, inclines, and halts directly in front of the second man in the first squad and on line with and at *Normal Interval (Close Interval)* to the right of the first sergeant. The other platoon sergeants execute the same actions as the first sergeant approaches their platoons.

NOTE: As soon as the platoon sergeant and first sergeant have halted in front of the first two men, the platoon sergeant commands ***Second, Third, and Fourth***

Squads, AT EASE. When moving from man to man during the inspection, the first sergeant and platoon sergeant (executive officer and first sergeant if the commander is inspecting) simultaneously face to the right in marching, take two short steps (one step if the company is at close interval), halt, and face to the left. After the first sergeant has inspected the last man in the front rank, the platoon sergeant hesitates momentarily and allows the first sergeant to precede him as he inspects the front rank from the rear. As the first sergeant begins to inspect the rear of each rank, the platoon sergeant commands the next squad to *Attention*. As they begin to inspect the next rank, the platoon sergeant commands the last rank inspected to stand *At Ease*. Normally, when inspecting the rear of each rank, the first sergeant conducts a walking inspection. As the first sergeant inspects the rear of the last man in each rank, he turns and halts directly in front of the squad leader of the next rank. The platoon sergeant turns and halts directly in front of the second man. If the commander is inspecting, the executive officer and first sergeant march past (behind) the company commander and assume their positions to his left.

c. As the first sergeant halts and is directly in front of and facing the individual being inspected, the individual executes *Inspection Arms*. If the first sergeant wants to inspect the individual's weapon, he inspects the weapon first, then the individual's uniform and appearance. As soon as the first sergeant grasps the weapon, the individual releases the weapon and resumes the *Position of Attention*. When the first sergeant has finished inspecting the weapon, he returns it in the same manner as it was received. The individual receives the weapon by grasping the center of the handguard just forward of the slip ring with the left hand and the small of the stock with the right hand. He then executes *Ready, Port Arms; Order Arms*.

NOTE: In the event the first sergeant does not want to inspect the weapon, the individual remains at *Inspection Arms* until the first sergeant has halted in front of and is facing the next man. The individual then executes *Ready, Port, Arms* and *Order Arms*. As the first sergeant moves to the rear of the rank being inspected, each man, as the first sergeant approaches, unfastens the snap of his scabbard, grasps the point of the scabbard with the left hand, and moves the point slightly forward. The scabbard is held in position until the bayonet has been replaced or, if the bayonet is not inspected, until the first sergeant has moved to the next man. At that time, the securing straps are fastened and the *Position of Attention* is resumed.

d. The correct method of manipulating a rifle for inspection is as follows:

(1) When receiving the rifle from the inspected individual, reach forward and grasp the rifle at the upper portion of the handguard with the right hand. Lower the rifle diagonally to the left, twist the rifle slightly, insert the tip of the little finger of the left hand into the ejection port (do not twist the rifle but insert the thumb into the receiver of the M14-series rifle), and look into the barrel. The finger reflects sufficient light for the inspection of the barrel.

(2) Grasp the small of the stock with the left hand and raise the rifle to a horizontal position (sights up) with the muzzle to the right. The rifle is centered on the body with the forearms horizontal and the palms up. Move the rifle horizontally to the left and inspect the upper portion of the rifle beginning with the flash suppressor. Move the rifle slowly to the right inspecting the butt. Return the rifle to the center of the body.

(3) Keeping the rifle horizontal, rotate it 180 degrees (sights toward the body) so that the sights point toward the marching surface. Move the rifle horizontally to the left and inspect the muzzle. Move the rifle slowly to the right and inspect the butt. When moving the rifle across the body, twist the rifle as necessary and inspect the movable parts on the sides of the receiver. Having completed the inspection of the lower parts of the rifle, return it to the center of the body.

(4) Keeping the rifle horizontal, rotate the rifle 180 degrees (sights away from the body) so that the sights are up. Release the left hand and return the rifle in the same manner as received.

(5) When inspecting a weapon other than a rifle, the inspector receives the weapon with his right hand and inspects it in the most convenient manner. Having completed the inspection, the weapon is returned with the right hand in the same manner as received.

e. When the first sergeant has completed the inspection of the platoon, the platoon sergeant commands the platoon to *Attention* and overtakes the first sergeant en route back to the front of the platoon. The platoon sergeant halts at his post facing to the front (*Salutes* are exchanged if the commander is inspecting). The first sergeant (or commander with or without the inspecting party) faces to the right in marching and moves to the next platoon. As soon as the first sergeant has cleared the first platoon, the platoon sergeant faces about, commands ***Close Ranks, MARCH*** and ***AT EASE***, and then faces about and executes *At Ease*. When the first sergeant has completed the inspection of the last platoon (exchanged *Salutes* with the platoon sergeant), he returns to his post at the center of the company and commands the company to *Attention*. He then dismisses the company, as previously described.

f. When the company is inspected by an officer of a higher command, on the approach of the inspecting officer, the company commander commands ***Company, ATTENTION***. He then faces about, salutes, and reports, ***“Sir, the company is prepared for inspection.”*** The inspection is conducted as previously described except that the company commander takes a position immediately to the left of the inspecting officer. The inspection is terminated by the company commander in the same manner prescribed for a platoon sergeant.

8-20. IN-QUARTERS INSPECTION (STAND BY)

When the first sergeant wants to conduct an in-quarters inspection, the members are positioned on line with their equipment (or as near it as possible).

a. The platoon sergeant positions himself in the path of the inspecting officer at a point near his area of responsibility. At the approach of the inspecting officer, the platoon sergeant commands ***Platoon, ATTENTION***, salutes, and reports, ***“Sir, the platoon is prepared for inspection.”***

NOTE: When the situation dictates, the platoon sergeant may report to the inspecting officer outside of the quarters. A designated individual commands the members to *Attention* as the inspector enters the quarters (bay).

b. The platoon sergeant then guides the inspector along a route dictated by the physical arrangement of the personnel and equipment. Upon entering the area, the highest ranking soldier present commands **AT EASE**. As the inspector approaches each individual or his equipment, the individual automatically assumes the *Position of Attention*. When the inspector has moved to the next man, the last man inspected resumes the position of *At Ease*. As the inspector begins to exit the area after completing the inspection, **CARRY ON** is commanded.

NOTE: When inspecting soldiers' rooms, *Attention* is not commanded. The individuals automatically assume the *Position of Attention* as the inspector enters the room. The inspector then commands **AT EASE**. As the inspector approaches each soldier, the soldier assumes the *Position of Attention* and resumes *At Ease* after he has been inspected.